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ABSTRACT

This manual for public library board members in Texas was written to help new board members learn how to delineate their powers and responsibilities and to contribute to the training of all board members. Information on issues concerning public libraries is provided, and fundamental issues involved in setting library policy and priorities are identified. The role of the trustee as communicating agent between the library and the public, and between the library and community government, is examined and guidelines are presented. (CWM)

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TEXAS LIBRARY TRUSTEES

A HANDBOOK FOR PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD MEMBERS IN TEXAS

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

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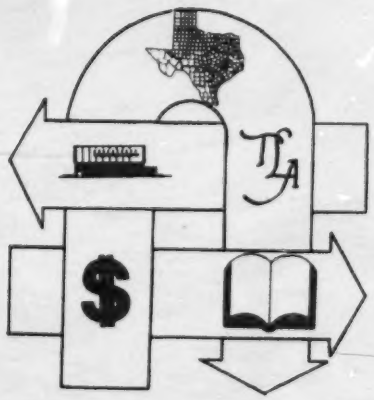
"...tomorrow's libraries will make information more available and more useful to more people that ever before." Robert Frederick Smith, managing editor, Advanced Technology Libraries.



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TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

Texas State Library
Library Development Division
Austin, Texas
1979

IR007570

"Increasingly, the public library has become the community's encyclopedia of hard facts about everything under the sun; a reference library for student and adult researchers; a children's reading room; a young adults' library; an adult educational facility; a second home for senior citizens... ... an essential community resource like the hospital and fire department." Virginia G. Young

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Objectives of this Handbook

To assist new board members to understand the function of the library board in the community.

To delineate the responsibilities of both governing and advisory boards.

To encourage all trustees to become more expert in fulfilling their responsibilities.

To help trustees become effective in their roles as communicating agents between the library and the public; between the library and the governing body of the community.

To raise questions that should be discussed by all library trustees.

To provide information and sources of information on library concerns.

Acknowledgements

We would like to take this opportunity to thank:

- the writers and editors of other states' library trustee handbooks whose ideas we have adapted to our situation.
- Alice Ihrig whose trustee workshops have been the direct inspiration for parts of the handbook.
- Austin Public Library Commission which served as an example for some ideas expressed in the handbook.

Introduction

Any communication among board members of public libraries throughout Texas inevitably discloses, in a striking way, the fact that there is great variation in the powers and responsibilities of library boards in Texas. Some board members speak of raising money and preparing budgets; others complain that they are only a rubber stamp to both librarian and local governing officials. Other board members describe situations running the gamut between the two extremes. Still others, and this is too frequently the case, are unable to give a clear picture of their powers and responsibilities.

In light of the many differing configurations of library boards in Texas, the primary purpose of this handbook is to help new board members learn how to find out what their powers and responsibilities are. Since even trustees who understand their role and duties can always become more expert and effective, the secondary purpose is to contribute to the training of all board members. It is hoped that public librarians and elected officials will find this handbook helpful, too.

Expertise and effectiveness come with knowledge and with practice. We have attempted to point the way to information which will make understanding greater, knowledge more complete, and practice easier.

Public libraries belong to the citizens of the community which supports them with taxes. Therefore library boards, either advisory or governing, are created by laws to act as citizens' agents and protectors of community property. By definition, this function is that of trusteeship, and library board members are frequently called trustees. Texas library board members can be appointed, elected, named by the preceding board, or named in articles of incorporation. They are all trustees, for they are entrusted with community property and programs. The terms "board members" and "trustees" will be used interchangeably in this handbook.

Besides the language of the library world and the facts and figures which trustees need to know, fundamental issues not related to libraries alone are involved in setting library policy and priorities. We have tried to bring some of these issues to your attention in such a way that you can become more familiar with all aspects of them.

Finally, this handbook is by no means complete. Since it will be reprinted each year for new trustees, changes and additions can and will be made. The Library Development Division will welcome suggestions for its improvement and completion.

Public Library Boards in Texas

THE GOVERNING BOARD

When Articles of Incorporation are filed for a library under the Texas Non-Profit Corporation Act, a governing board which is responsible for the operation of the library is established. Duties of the trustees of such boards are spelled out in the Articles of Incorporation and may include:

- employing the librarian
- entering into contracts
- setting library policies
- preparing the budget
- obtaining necessary funds to implement the library program.

To know exactly what the powers and responsibilities are, the board members must be familiar with both the Articles of Incorporation and the by-laws of the board. Most meetings of a governing board must be open.

THE ADVISORY BOARD

When the board is appointed by the local governing body of the city or county government of which the library is a department, it functions in an advisory capacity. The responsibilities depend upon the statute which created the board and can vary. In most cases the first responsibility is to advise the librarian and the local government on library concerns; the second duty is to use its influence to promote services and programs of the library in the community. They advise in all areas listed under governing boards as responsibilities.

Advisory board meetings may be closed, although it is a good idea to have frequent open meetings.

In all cases it is important for the current local government, the city manager (if there is one), the trustees themselves, and the librarian to agree on the duties of the board. Library trustees can and do flounder into ineffectiveness when their role is perceived differently by the various arms of the community with which they are involved. As trustees become familiar with the problems encountered in supplying good, economical library service to the community, and more versed in effective methods of dealing with those problems, they can become very influential with both elected officials and citizens of the community.

Though their methods may vary, both advisory and governing boards are really concerned with the same objectives - better and more economical library service for the people of their community. This handbook is directed toward helpful discussions in that area of common concern.

Your Job Is

TO KNOW:

- whether your library board is governing or advisory.
- what your responsibilities are.
- what the services and resources available in the library are.
- your local government - the structure, the people, the mode of operating.
- the information needs and wishes of the people in your community.
- how to work effectively in a group.
- the services and resources available in other libraries in your community.
- the system of which your library is a member: the responsibilities and privileges incurred by membership in the Texas Library System.
- the lingo - don't hesitate to ask when you don't understand. Others are probably in the same boat.

TO ATTEND:

- board meetings.
- committee meetings.
- Texas Library Association and American Library Association meetings whenever possible.
- other local meetings where your presence can be beneficial to the library.

TO PLAN:

- policies of the library.
- future growth and priorities of the library.
- active community awareness programs.
- orientation for new board members.

TO SUPPORT:

- your librarian and library.
- your local governing body.
- the public.

TO ACT:

- to articulate your library's needs.
- to promote your library whenever called upon by the librarian, the city council or by private citizens.
- to develop good personal relations with local, state, and federal representatives of government.
- to make yourself, your board and your library visible in the community.

TO REMEMBER:

- the library board acts only as a whole.
- the library board must authorize you to act as an individual in behalf of the library.
- an advisory board does not run the operations of the library.

Relating to the Public

DO YOU KNOW

Which shelves in your library are always empty?

Which journals are most used - or lost?

Who is not coming into your library?

Who the local authors, artists, musicians, dancers are?

What products are made in your community?

What and how people celebrate?

Who the decision makers are?

LISTEN to your friends
- -acquaintances
- -business associates

DRIVE home a different way.

STOP and see a friend you haven't seen for years.

JOIN a new organization.

WEAR your library trustee hat everywhere.

HAVE FUN being a trustee.

SUPPORT your librarian.

TALK: Be NOISY about your library.

How to write a news release? →
- Know the CULTURAL INTERESTS of the community.
- Go to the editor for help.
- Feature something special.

How to plan a public relations campaign? →
- Set objectives.
- Know your target group.
- Find out who will mail your library flyers with their routine mailing.

How to tell the library story? →
- Know the library story
  - -read
  - -talk to the local librarians
  - -talk to other trustees
- Collect those interesting library anecdotes.
- Learn to be comfortable speaking to groups.

Where is Your Library on the Financial Totem Pole?

HIGH ... a visible, important community resource?

LOW .... a low-priority, expensive luxury?

YOU can be the difference. Do you know that over half America's wage dollars are going to people whose job is working with information in one form or another? The repercussions of the world's information explosion and the development of the ever cheaper information processor, the computer, means that it is more and more important for information to be kept available to all in a democratic society. The public library with its dedication to service and access to all recorded human experience can keep the channels to information open in a world where information is more important than it has ever been before.

WHO WILL LOBBY FOR THE LIBRARY?

YOU have the personal contacts. As an appointed board member, you have a close tie and a special bond with elected officials. You share with them the responsibility for making public policies and decisions. You can give the best representation of both the library and the people to elected officials whether they are local, state or federal.

YOU are in a position to know the library story. You can find out the facts and figures that really matter for your own library. For history and information about libraries in general, see the reading list in this manual. For specific information about your library, talk to your librarians and experienced trustees.

YOU have the interest and the enthusiasm to take the initiative. The most effective liaison with legislators is systematic and continuous,with goals and objectives clearly defined. When there is a basic structure for communication established, it is easy to communicate when special needs arise.

"The process of expressing opinions to the decision-makers and pushing in support of one's opinions is called LOBBYING, and its not a bad word, coming as it does from the time-honored custom of talking with legislators in the lobbies of city halls, state houses, and Congress. People who speak out with knowledge and experience, with enthusiasm and commitment and with facts and figures are equipped to lobby in the best meaning of the word. LOBBYING IS COMMUNICATION...." Governing Pennsylvania's Public Libraries: A Handbook for Public Library Trustees, p. 27.

Money Matters

WHERE does it come from? Public libraries are funded by various mixtures of local, state and federal money. The largest portion, 88% to 90% for Texas public libraries, comes from appropriation by local governing bodies. State funding accounts for about 5% in Texas, and federal funding another 5%. Local bonds for building purposes are frequently issued, and some libraries receive appreciable funding from private sources.

WHAT does it buy? A library provides materials and service to patrons of all ages and groups in the locality and, in many cases, to other localities as well through cooperative services. To do this, the wisest possible use of funds must be made for an attractive, inviting, and efficient location; for a wide variety of materials for information, educational, and recreational needs; and, most important, for a competent and effective staff to assist patrons and to organize materials so they are accessible.

Customarily local funds support basic services (buildings, materials collection, staff, and general operating expenses). State and federal funding are generally used for state and regional interlibrary cooperation, collection development (for books and other materials), and for program innovation. Private sources usually specify uses for money which they donate.

Trustees need to be aware of the particular mix of funding that supports their library. Governing trustees will help prepare the budget, and in some cases, are responsible for raising the funds to support the budgets which they prepare. In most libraries, budget preparation is the librarian's job and the library board, or a committee from the library board, assists. All boards approve the budget before it is presented to the governing body. All trustees, both governing and advisory, need to understand and be able to support their library's budget. More information on library budgeting in general can be found in the article and book by Ann Prentice in the bibliography at the end of the handbook. For specific information about budgeting in a particular library, see the chairman of the finance committee on the board and/or the library director.

HOW
can a trustee influence
the process:

Fiscal responsibility of trustees, like all other duties, varies with the powers delegated by law to the library board. To know what they are, the trustee must be thoroughly familiar with the board's charter or creating ordinance as well as the by-laws under which it operates. All trustees, advisory and governing, will find that a thorough knowledge of the financial status and budgeting procedures of their library will facilitate support of the budget to the governing body which appropriates and to the taxpayers who provide the funds. They will be called upon to do both.

Another area in which a trustee needs to be well informed if he/she is to be influential in the financial processes is that of the information needs of the community. An active trustee will want to know the assets of all libraries in the community as well as his/her own. He/she will need to visit libraries frequently. Can you borrow the materials you want? Books? Records? Films? Prints? Does anyone else want or need them? How much money will supply those needs? Is it possible to translate the information needs of the people of the community into taxes for the individual citizen? Is it possible to find another source of funds?

NEED TO KNOW YOUR COMMUNITY?

Collect:

Census figures about

- economic levels
- family size
- ethnic backgrounds
- ages
- education
- occupations

Name of

- persons who work with the community
- organizations
- schools
- community businesses

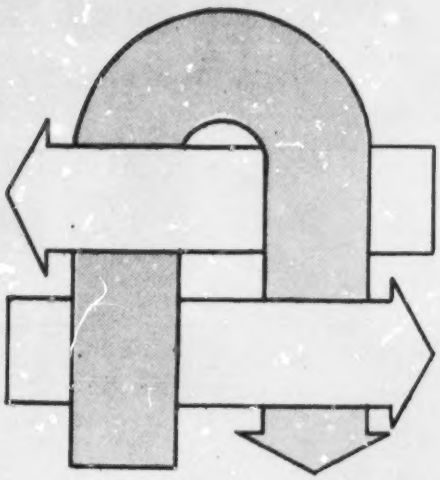
Ideas you hear expressed

Problems raised

Issues discussed

Can some of the needs of the community be supplied by sharing materials or services with other libraries? If your library is a member of the Texas Library System, your regional system coordinator and consultants of the Library Development Division of the Texas State Library will be glad to assist you in understanding the services and benefits to your library which are funded by state and federal funds.

Library trustees expect to serve as liaisons between the library and the local governing body. They can also provide great service by fostering good relations and raising library visibility with state legislators. Appropriations of state funds for libraries may depend on it.



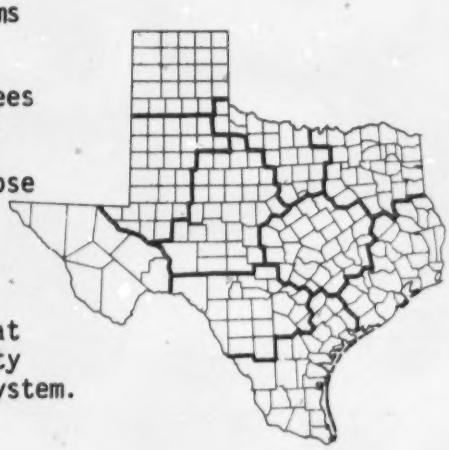
Growth Through Cooperation

Cooperation among librarians has been practiced for many years. Today there is a new urgency to the ideas and philosophy embodied by it. Accelerated demands for improved services, tight budgets, increasing costs of materials and personnel, and lack of space for more materials, have combined to make cooperative services an effective solution to some problems. The Texas Library System, funded by state and federal funds, tends to equalize library service throughout the state, since it makes possible sharing of both materials and services.

In Texas, the Library Systems Act has established ten regional library systems with a large city library serving as a major resource library for each system. Each regional system has its own goals and services. There is a system office housed in the major resource library where a coordinator and staff of consultants administer cooperative services to the libraries of the region. Member libraries are eligible to share the materials and services: non-member libraries can usually receive consulting services and assistance in meeting membership requirements. Some of the services offered by the system are:

- Workshops and workshop assistance
- Consulting and continuing education for librarians
- Film lending
- Books-by-Mail to the rurally isolated and, in some cases, to the homebound
- Collection development programs
- Reference back-up

What has this to do with trustees? Since trustees are involved with setting policy and long range goals for their library, they need to know the needs of their constituency and ways to meet those needs. They should know about the cooperative programs available to them and the potential for increasing service through cooperation.

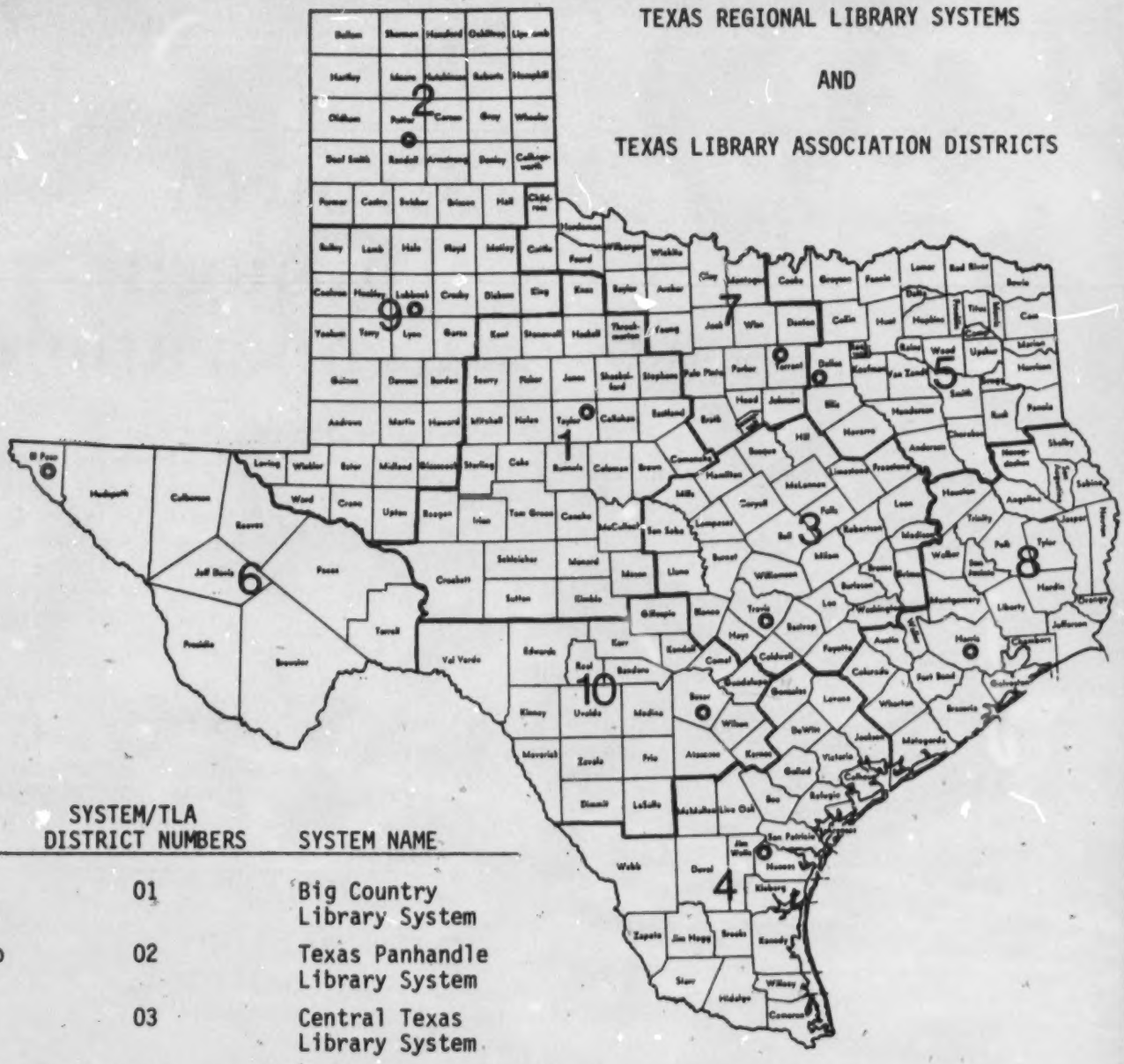


The map on the other side of this page shows what regional system your library is in and which city library is the Major Resource Center for your system.

TEXAS REGIONAL LIBRARY SYSTEMS

AND

TEXAS LIBRARY ASSOCIATION DISTRICTS



CITY	SYSTEM/TLA DISTRICT NUMBERS	SYSTEM NAME
Abilene	01	Big Country Library System
Amarillo	02	Texas Panhandle Library System
Austin	03	Central Texas Library System
Corpus Christi	04	South Texas Library System
Dallas	05	Northeast Texas Library System
El Paso	06	Texas Trans Pecos Library System
Fort Worth	07	North Texas Library System
Houston	08	Houston Area Library System
Lubbock	09	West Texas Library System
San Antonio	10	San Antonio Major Resource Center

Intellectual Freedom

Intellectual freedom is the term used to express the philosophy, concepts and policies outlined in the Library Bill of Rights and The Freedom to Read Statement. To ensure access to all kinds of recorded knowledge most libraries and librarians adopt the two documents as policy. They adopt them because they believe that people are inherently able to learn and mature if they are exposed to many different kinds of thought. Any limitation on access to information can be a limitation on the right to learn and mature, and so can be dangerous.

The concept of intellectual freedom is sometimes challenged when library users see and read things with which they do not agree. Every library board member is open to this kind of challenge. You need to read the documents, think about the concepts expressed in them, discuss them with others, and know where you stand on them. You will then be able to help your community understand that not all people will like everything they find in their library.

When complaints about material are brought to your library, you need to be able

- to listen.
- to treat the complainant courteously.
- to refrain from panic.
- to know the library's routine procedures for filing complaints.
- to know where and from whom you can expect help.
- to understand the reasonable basis for the library's policy.

LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS

The Council of the American Library Association reaffirms its belief in the following basic policies which should govern the services of all libraries.

1. As a responsibility of library service, books and other library materials selected should be chosen for values of interest, information and enlightenment of all the people of the community. In no case should library materials be excluded because of the race or nationality or the social, political, or religious views of the authors.

2. Libraries should provide books and other materials presenting all points of view concerning the problems and issues of our times; no library materials should be proscribed or removed from libraries because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.

3. Censorship should be challenged by libraries in the maintenance of their responsibility to provide public information and enlightenment.

4. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.

5. The rights of an individual to the use of a library should not be denied or abridged because of his age, race, religion, national origins or social or political views.

6. As an institution of education for democratic living, the library should welcome the use of its meeting rooms for socially useful and cultural activities and discussion of current public questions. Such meeting places should be available on equal terms to all groups in the community regardless of the beliefs and affiliations of their members, provided that the meetings be open to the public.

THE FREEDOM TO READ

A joint Statement by the American Library Association and the Association of American Publishers originally issued May, 1953.

1. It is in the public interest for publishers and librarians to make available the widest diversity of views and expressions, including those which are unorthodox or unpopular with the majority.

2. Publishers, librarians and book sellers do not need to endorse every idea or presentation contained in the books they make available. It would conflict with the public interest for them to establish their own political, moral or aesthetic views as a standard for determining what books should be published or circulated.

3. It is contrary to the public interest for publishers or librarians to determine the acceptability of a book on the basis of the personal history or political affiliations of the author.

4. There is no place in our society for efforts to coerce the taste of others, to confine adults to the reading matter deemed suitable for adolescents or to inhibit the efforts of writers to achieve artistic expression.

5. It is not in the public interest to force a reader to accept with any book the prejudgment of a label characterizing the book or author as subversive or dangerous.

6. It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians, as guardians of the people's freedom to read, to contest encroachments upon that freedom by individuals or groups seeking to impose their own standards or tastes upon the community at large.

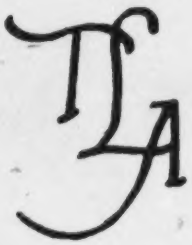
7. It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians to give full meaning to read by providing books that enrich the quality and diversity of thought and expression. By the exercise of this affirmative responsibility, bookmen can demonstrate that the answer to a bad book is a good one, the answer to a bad idea is a good one.

NOTE: "Books" as used in this statement include all kinds of materials acquired for library. The complete text of this statement is available from ALA.

Talk To Other Trustees

It is estimated that there are 61,000 trustees of public libraries in the United States. About 2,000 of them are Texas public library trustees. Since trusteeship is a group activity in which individuals act through the board as a whole, the more trustees get together to discuss common problems and concerns, the better their understanding of effective ways of carrying responsibilities together will be. Moreover, the attrition rate for trustees is high: members move on and off boards every year. A centralized organization for providing continuity and bringing experienced trustees of different boards together with new board members is needed. What organizations are better qualified to do that than the state and federal library organizations?

The Texas Library Association has a Public Library Division and also a trustee Round Table: both of them schedule activities of interest to trustees. Membership in the Texas Library Association costs $10 annually for trustees and includes a subscription to Texas Library Journal. It also includes eligibility to attend the annual TLA conference and Trustee Round Table meeting, where you will meet librarians and library board members from all over the state. The Friends of Texas Libraries, another organization which can be helpful to trustees, is affiliated with TLA.



The American Library Association also has a trustee division, the American Library Trustee Association (ALTA). Membership costs $20 for ALA and $15 for ALTA. It provides full ALA membership benefits including a subscription to American Libraries and the Public Library Trustee. The goals of ALTA include a continuing comprehensive educational program to enable library trustees to discharge their responsibilities in a manner best fitted to benefit the public and the libraries they represent. Committees of experienced trustees as well as librarians work to accomplish that aim and are willing to share their expertise with library boards all over the country.

Application forms for both TLA and ALA are included in this manual.

Suggested Readings

ADMINISTRATION OF THE SMALL PUBLIC LIBRARY by Dorothy Sinclair. ALA 1965.

AMERICAN LIBRARIES The official publication of the American Library Association to all its members. Published monthly.

HOW TO MAKE MEETINGS WORK: THE NEW INTERACTION METHOD by Michael Doyle and David Straus.

LIBRARIES TODAY AND TOMORROW How Do We Pay for Them? Who Uses Them? Who Staffs Them? What are Their Services? by Virginia H. Mathews. Doubleday, 1976.

LIBRARY LAWS OF TEXAS A compilation of statutes of Texas dealing with libraries and librarians. Texas State Library, 1972.

THE LIBRARY TRUSTEE: A PRACTICAL GUIDEBOOK, third edition, by Virginia G. Young. Bowker, 1978. A comprehensive book on trusteeship.

LIBRARY TRUSTEE NEWSLETTER A new, bimonthly periodical for trustees edited by Nancy Stiegemeyer, a trustee and well-known member of ALTA.

LOCAL POWER AND THE COMMUNITY by Edward N. Howard. Public Library Reporter No. 18 ALA, 1978.

"A Mission Statement for Public Libraries: Guidelines for Public Library Service: Part I" prepared by ALA's Public Library Association Goals, Guidelines, and Standards Committee AMERICAN LIBRARIES, December 1977 p. 615-620.

PUBLIC LIBRARY FINANCE by Ann E. Prentice. ALA, 1977. The most recent book on all aspects of public library finance.

THE PUBLIC LIBRARY TRUSTEE Official publication of the American Library Trustee Association, a division of ALA. Issued several times a year.

THE SMALL PUBLIC LIBRARY: A SERIES OF GUIDES FOR COMMUNITY LIBRARIANS AND TRUSTEES American Library Associaiton, 1963. (Small Library Pamphlets)

STANDARDS FOR TEXAS PUBLIC LIBRARIES Adopted by the Council of the Texas Library Association, 1972.

TEXAS LIBRARIES A quarterly publication of the Texas State Library.

TEXAS LIBRARY JOURNAL The monthly journal of the Texas Library Association. A subscription in included with membership in TLA.

Join Now

Tear off and mail this page to the Texas Library Association with your check for $10.00.

TEXAS LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

—organized in 1902 to promote Library Service in Texas—

8989 WESTHEIMER, SUITE 108

HOUSTON, TEXAS 77063

FOR THE CALENDAR YEAR 1979

PLEASE READ BEFORE COMPLETING FORM

Changes in choice of Divisions and Round Tables or Interest Groups may be made each year at the time you pay dues. Dues are for the calendar year (Jan-Dec) and so are your selections.

LAST NAME | FIRST NAME | MI

YOUR POSITION | NAME OF LIBRARY

MAILING ADDRESS

CITY | COUNTY | STATE | ZIP CODE

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

CHECK DIVISION AND ROUNDTABLE OR INTEREST GROUP

DIVISION

1. ☐ COLLEGE 2. ☐ PUBLIC 3. ☐ SCHOOL 4. ☐ SPECIAL

ROUNDTABLES

A. ☐ Acquisitions E. ☐ Arts D. ☐ Childrens J. ☐ Junior Members G. ☐ Trustee
B. ☐ Archives C. ☐ Catalogers K. ☐ Documents F. ☐ Reference H. ☐ Young Adult
M. ☐ Administration L. ☐ Interlibrary Loan

INTEREST GROUPS

P. ☐ Audio Visual N. ☐ Institutional

1979 SCHEDULE OF MEMBERSHIP DUES

1. Librarian Members, basic dues:
   a. Salary up to $ 3,599 ..... annual dues $ 3.00
   b. Salary $ 3,600 to $ 4,799 ..... annual dues $ 6.00
   c. Salary $ 4,800 to $ 5,999 ..... annual dues $10.00
   d. Salary $ 6,000 to $ 7,999 ..... annual dues $12.00
   e. Salary $ 8,000 to $ 9,999 ..... annual dues $15.00
   f. Salary $10,000 to $11,999 ..... annual dues $18.00
   g. Salary $12,000 to $14,999 ..... annual dues $21.00
   h. Salary $15,000 to $19,999 ..... annual dues $25.00
   i. Salary $20,000 and above ..... annual dues $30.00
2. Retired Librarians ..... annual dues $ 2.00
3. Library School Students ..... annual dues $ 5.00
4. Trustee and Lay Members ..... annual dues $10.00
5. Supporting Members ..... annual dues $50.00

Annual membership dues are calculated from schedule above, enter this amount as BASIC DUES.
Basic Dues entitles you to membership in one Division and one Roundtable. Pay 15% of Basic Dues for each additional Division and 5% of Basic Dues for each additional Roundtable or Interest Group. Please enter on this form the number of, and appropriate amounts for the additional Divisions and/or Roundtables and/or Interest Groups. $4.00 of your Dues is for a years subscription to the TEXAS LIBRARY JOURNAL and $1.00 for years subscription to Added Entries.

Please make checks payable to the Texas Library Association and mail to:
Mrs. Jarre Hetherington, Exec. Secy.
The Texas Library Association
8989 Westheimer, Suite 108
Houston, Texas 77063

WERE YOU A MEMBER IN 1978?

	Yes	No		Yes	No
T.L.A.	☐	☐	A.L.A.	☐	☐
T.S.T.A.	☐	☐	S.W.L.A.	☐	☐

BASIC DUES (includes one division and one roundtable) ..... $_____

_____Extra Division at 15% ea. ..... $_____

_____Extra Roundtables at 5% ea. ..... $_____

_____Extra Interest Group at 5% ea. $_____

AMOUNT ⟶ TOTAL $_____

I wish to use Mastercharge or VISA to pay my 1980 dues. Yes_____ No_____

Appendices

A Suggestions for Organizing Library Boards
Texas State Library, Library Development Division

B By-Laws

1. Suggested By-Laws for Advisory Boards
2. By-Laws of the Public Library Commission of the Austin Public Library

C Quiz

D The Trustee Checks His Library

SUGGESTIONS FOR ORGANIZING LIBRARY BOARDS

Since these suggestions are broad and universal in scope, each library board must adapt them to conform to the requirements of the local governing body.

I. WHY LIBRARY BOARDS?

A. Advise and counsel the librarian

B. Support library budget and policies before the city council or county commissioners' court

C. Citizen participation and input

II. COMPOSITION OF LIBRARY BOARDS

A. County commissioners, or their delegated representatives, may serve as a board for county libraries (five to seven members recommended)

B. Municipal library boards (five, seven, or nine members recommended)

C. Representative of community interests: geographical, occupational, age, and ethnic/minority groups

III. SELECTION OF BOARD MEMBERS

Library board members should be chosen because of certain qualities which make them valuable to the board:

1. Ability to work with others
2. Efficient business ability
3. Good judgment
4. Genuine interest in the library, the community, and improving the services of both
5. Initiative, originality, tenacity in formulating and implementing plans effectively
6. Time to devote to this service

IV. TERMS OF SERVICE

A. Usually two to three years

B. Expiration dates for terms of members on new boards usually chosen by lot

C. Bylaws or documents establishing the library board often provide for two consecutive terms, with eligibility for reappointment after serving one term.

D. Rotation of offices among members recommended

E. Dismissal from board if member continues to be inactive

V. SUGGESTED BOARD COMMITTEES

A. Budget and finance

B. Buildings and equipment

C. General library policies

D. Personnel

E. Publicity and public relations

VI. DUTIES OF BOARD MEMBERS

A. Attend all meetings of the board and maintain records of the meetings.

B. Be aware of the programs and needs of the library, the library trends in the vicinity and elsewhere, and state and national standards.

C. Become familiar with state and local library laws.

D. Employ a qualified and competent librarian. In most cases, the city or county handles this function.

E. Recommend policies and objectives (short and long range) governing the library's program to city council or county commissioners' court. Policies should be regularly reviewed, revised when necessary, and conform to city or county regulations. Each board should consider and adopt an official policy on the following:

1. Hours open
2. Basic policy regarding book and materials selection and purchase
3. Charges for lost library materials and fines on overdue materials
4. Service to schools
5. Service to special groups such as hospitals, senior citizens, civic organizations, handicapped
6. Methods of extending services such as new branches, bookmobiles
7. Acceptance of gifts
8. Paying expenses of personnel to attend professional meetings and workshops
9. Use of meeting room

F. Establish and support a planned program of public relations.

G. Report regularly to local officials and to the general public.

H. Promote and support adequate funding of the library program and plans for expansion of service and facilities.

I. Support library legislation which extends and improves library service.

J. Promote and support the library's membership in the State library system.

K. Actively participate in discussions and decisions regarding cooperative library systems.

L. Ensure that the governing authority of the library appoints or elects a citizen to represent the library at the annual meeting of system member libraries.

M. Promote and support adequate local, state, and federal funding for public libraries and the state library system.

N. Gain an understanding of librarianship by attending workshops, participating in professional meetings, and working on committee assignments.

VII. OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BOARD MEMBERS

A. Become a member of the Texas Library Association.

B. Become a member of the Trustee Section of the American Library Association.

C. Join and encourage others to join Friends of Texas Libraries.

D. Organize a Friends group for the library.

E. Read articles from library journals, newsletters, and other informational materials pertinent to library services.

F. Support and assist in promoting National Library Week.

G. Be an active member of the community.

H. Work toward the legal establishment of the library as a city or county unit, if not yet established.

I. Work toward the legal establishment of the library board.

A library board may be established as an advisory board or as a governing board. When the library is officially part of the city or county government, the board is an advisory board. On the other hand, if the library has been established as a non-profit organization under the Articles of Incorporation of the Secretary of State, the board is a governing board and is empowered to administer the library's budget, employ the librarian, enter into contracts, and to set all library policies.

J. Officially adopt bylaws of the library board and written library policies. Submit these documents to the city council or the county commissioners' court for acceptance.

VIII. BOARD'S RESPONSIBILITY FOR CARE OF PROPERTY

A. Review insurance coverage

1. Fire and other protection for buildings
2. Public liability
3. Bookmobile coverage
4. Coverage of book and non-book collections

B. Keep buildings in repair

C. Secure new and needed equipment

IX. DUTIES OF LIBRARIAN

A. Attend all board meetings except the one at which the librarian's employment or salary is discussed.

B. Recommend needed policies for board action.

C. Implement the policy of the library as adopted at board meetings.

D. Prepare an annual budget with the assistance of the board and submit it to the city manager or finance director for approval by city council or county commissioners' court.

E. Help the board chairman prepare meeting agenda.

F. Select library employees and supervise their work.

G. Select or supervise selection and ordering of library materials and supplies.

H. Maintain an active public relations program.

I. Design and implement plans for extending use of library facilities.

J. Cooperate actively with education organizations of the state and community.

K. Report regularly on the progress of the library to the local government, library board, and general public.

L. Submit regular annual reports to the Texas State Library.

M. Attend professional meetings.

N. Provide staff with opportunities to continue their professional education.

O. Promote the well-being of the staff by providing adequate hospitalization benefits and retirement programs.

P. Recommend adequate salary scale for staff.

Q. Prepare definite scale of promotions and raises in cases not under governmental merit system.

R. Analyze library operations and programs in terms of cost and effectiveness in meeting community needs.

S. Develop plans which qualify the library for membership in the Texas Library System.

T. Participate in activities of the regional library system by attending meetings and providing ideas about potential system services which will benefit the users of the library.

Texas State Library
Library Development Division
Box 12927 Capitol Station
Austin, Texas 78711

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This example of by-laws shows the areas for which provision must be made. Each board needs to draw up its own set of by-laws to fit its specific needs.

SUGGESTED BY-LAWS FOR LIBRARY BOARDS

MEETINGS: The regular bi-monthly meeting of the Library Board shall be held on the _____ at _____ in the library.

The annual meeting shall be held at the time of the regular bimonthly meeting at _____ (place).

Special meetings may be called by the President, or upon the request of _____ members, for the transaction of business stated in the call for meeting.

Notice shall be sent at least _____ days before the meeting.

Librarian shall be present at all board meetings.

OFFICERS: Officers of the Board shall be chosen at the annual meeting of the board, and shall be as follows: President, Vice-president and Secretary.

The president shall preside at all meetings, appoint special committees as needed, and authorize calls for any special meetings.

The vice-president assumes the duties of president in the absence of the president.

The secretary shall keep a true and accurate account of all board meeting proceedings and shall have custody of the minutes of the board.

The Library Board shall make recommendations to the _____ (governing body) for the appointment and reappointment of members to the Library Board. No member shall be recommended for reappointment after having served _____ full terms or _____ years.

COMMITTEES: Special committees for the study and investigation of special problems may be appointed by the president, such committees are to serve until the completion of the work for which they were appointed. All committees must make a progress report to the board at each meeting.

QUORUM: A quorum for the transaction of business shall consist of a majority of the members of the board.

LIBRARIAN: The Librarian shall be an ex-officio member of the board and shall have sole charge of the administration of the library under the direction and review of the _____. The Librarian shall be held responsible for the care of the buildings and equipment, for the employment and direction of the staff, for the efficiency of the library's service to the public, and for the operation of the library under the financial conditions set forth in the annual budget. The librarian shall attend all board meetings.

DUTIES: The advisory board shall have the following powers and perform the following duties:

It shall encourage the development of public libraries.

It shall recommend to the _____ (governing body) policies and programs for the advancement of the library.

It shall review the annual budget for the library prior to submission of the budget to the _____.

It shall co-operate with all other public and private groups in advancing the best interest of the public library.

It shall render to the _____ all recommendations it considers advisable regarding the library.

ORDER OF BUSINESS: The order of business at the regular meeting shall be as follows:

Call to order
Roll call of members
Reading and approval of minutes of last meeting
Report of the librarian
Report of committees
Communications
Unfinished business
New business
Adjournment

The president and the librarian in consultation shall prepare the Agenda of Business for each board meeting and present a copy of it to each board member present at the beginning of each meeting.

AMENDMENT OF BY-LAWS: These by-laws may be amended at any regular meeting of the board when a quorum is present by a unanimous vote, providing the amendment was stated in the call for the meeting.

BY-LAWS OF THE PUBLIC LIBRARY COMMISSION

THE AUSTIN PUBLIC LIBRARY

As Amended: March 23, 1977

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1. Pursuant to the requirements of the Code of the City of Austin, 1954, Chapter 18, the Public Library Commission shall consist of fifteen members elected by the City Council "To serve for a term of two years and until their successors are elected, unless sooner removed by the City Council."

2. Regular meetings shall be held every month except the months of August and December. The Commission members, by a majority vote at a regular meeting early in the calendar year, will designate the date and time of the regular meetings for the rest of the year. Date and time of a particular meeting may be altered by a 2/3 vote of the members present at any regular meeting. The President shall designate the place the meeting shall be held. Members must be notified of the meeting place at least one week before the meeting is held.

3. Special meetings may be held at any time at the call of the President or Vice President or at the call of any three members of the Commission, provided that written notice thereof be given to all Commissioners at least seven days in advance of the special meeting.

4. A quorum at any meeting shall consist of eight members.

5. The officers of the Commission shall be a President, Vice President and a Secretary. Their term of office shall be for two years. They shall be elected at the first regular meeting of the Commission following its election by the City Council and shall remain in office until their successors are elected by the Commission at its next regular or special meeting.

6. The duties of all officers shall be such as by custom and law and the rules of the Commission usually devolve upon such officers in accordance with their titles. The President shall be an ex-officio member of all standing committees.

7. There shall be the following standing committees, appointed by the President at the beginning of his term. Committee members shall serve for two years or until their successors are appointed and each committee shall consist of a chairman and at least two other members:

Committee on Building and Grounds
Committee on Finances
Committee on Policy and By-Laws
Committee on Public Relations
Council Liaison Committee

The duties of each standing committee shall be such as are associated with its name or as directed by action of the Commission. The President

shall appoint such special committees as directed by the Commission.

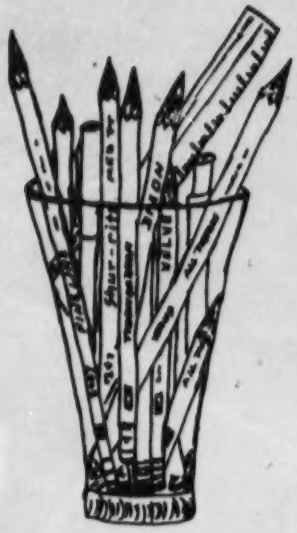
8. The Order of Business at all regular meetings of the Commission shall normally include the following:

Disposition of Minutes of Previous Meeting
Reports from the Library Administration
Committee Reports
Central Texas Library System Report
Friends' Report
Old Business
New Business

An agenda shall be prepared by the President and shall be mailed with the meeting notices. The agenda may be altered by a vote of the majority of members present at any meeting.

9. The Commission shall act as an advisory board generally to the City Council, the City Manager and the Director of Libraries in all matters pertaining to the establishment, maintenance and operation of the public libraries. The Director of Libraries shall report regularly to the Commission on the progress of library service to Austin citizens. In addition, the Director will recommend Commission action which the Director feels will promote better library service to the community.

10. Amendments to these rules may be proposed at any meeting provided such amendments are distributed in writing to the Commission members at least seven days in advance of such meeting. Amendments may be adopted by a majority vote of those present. Any of the foregoing rules may be temporarily suspended by a two-thirds vote of the members present at any meeting and the vote on such suspension shall be taken by yeas and nays and entered in the official record.



Quiz

HOW MANY OF THESE QUESTIONS CAN WE ANSWER WITH A "YES"?

1. Do we see our main job TO BE DETERMINING POLICIES OF THE LIBRARY, while leaving our LIBRARIAN IN FULL ADMINISTRATIVE CONTROL within the library?

2. Do we do our very best to select the finest LIBRARIAN we can find, with the best training, experience, personality, and good sense?

3. Do we cultivate a FRIENDLY, CONFIDENT RELATIONSHIP with our LIBRARIAN, and, where possible, with other members of the STAFF?

4. Do we work toward ADEQUATE SALARIES, REASONABLE HOURS, PLEASANT WORKING CONDITIONS for the staff, with high staff morale and good library service our goals?

5. Do we see to it that the LIBRARIAN HABITUALLY MEETS WITH THE BOARD, as its technical adviser and chief executive officer? Do we follow the usual custom of having the LIBRARIAN PREPARE THE AGENDA AND SERVE AS SECRETARY?

6. Do we make GETTING MONEY FOR THE LIBRARY a big part of our work? Do some of us accompany the LIBRARIAN to routine budget hearings before city or county officials, and speak up strongly for the library's needs?

7. Do we serve wisely and faithfully as TRUSTEES OF LIBRARY PROPERTY, where endowment funds, gifts of money or real estate are concerned? Do we make investments, purchases, insurance decisions, with studious care?

8. Do we INTERPRET OUR LIBRARY TO OUR COMMUNITY in all possible ways? Do we understand the importance of PUBLIC RELATIONS, and appreciate our individual and group abilities to talk about and write about OUR LIBRARY?

9. Have we recently evaluated the service of our library in accordance with the criteria stated in Standards for Texas Public Libraries, Interim Standards for Small Public Libraries or filled out a Do-It-Yourself Survey for the Small Library? (A copy of each of these is obtainable from the Library Development Division, Texas State Library.)

10. Do we understand TEXAS LIBRARY LAWS, what they mean to us and what their limitations are? Are we willing to STUDY AND WORK FOR LIBRARY LEGISLATION, for the greatest good of the greatest number of libraries?

11. Do we understand what ADVISORY AID we can secure from our LIBRARY DEVELOPMENT DIVISION, TEXAS STATE LIBRARY?

12. Are we concerned that NOT ALL OUR CITIZENS USE OUR LIBRARY? Do we try to make plans to EXTEND our library's services to more and more people? Do we have long-range policies?

13. Do we realize that LIBRARY MEETINGS are for TRUSTEES as well as for librarians? Have we ever attended a TEXAS LIBRARY ASSOCIATION DISTRICT MEETING? A STATE LIBRARY CONFERENCE? A NATIONAL MEETING? HAVE WE JOINED OUR STATE LIBRARY ASSOCIATION?

14. Do we encourage our LIBRARIAN and any of the STAFF MEMBERS that can be spared, to ATTEND LIBRARY MEETINGS? Do we allow such trips to be made at LIBRARY EXPENSE?

15. Do we believe that BOOKS can help TRUSTEES as well as other people? Have we read any of the books our Librarian can supply on LIBRARY MANAGEMENT, TRENDS, STANDARDS? Do we habitually read at least one LIBRARY MAGAZINE?

16. Do we ATTEND our BOARD MEETINGS REGULARLY?

17. Are we willing to resign or to refuse reappointment when poor health, advanced age, or conflict of duties prevent us from working regularly or efficiently?

THE PUBLIC LIBRARY TRUSTEE

September–December/1970 *SUPPLEMENT* *Mrs. Robert S. Ihrig, Editor*

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THE TRUSTEE CHECKS HIS LIBRARY

by Douglas W. Downey

How good is your library? How well are you fulfilling your job as a library trustee? One way to answer these questions is by asking yourself a number of other questions. Following is a list designed for this purpose. Ideally, the answer to each question should be "yes". In practice, many answers will be "no". Since these questions were prepared for national use, some may not apply in your area and some of the standards used may be superseded by your state standards.

Suggestions for Using This Questionnaire

Answer all the questions you can. Discuss those that you cannot answer with your librarian or fellow trustees.

Analyze your "no" answers. How important are these questions? How applicable are they to your community and your library? If they are important and are applicable, can you develop a program to bring about the necessary changes?

Compare your answers with those of your librarian and fellow trustees. How closely do you agree? If there are disagreements, why? Consider going through the entire list, item by item, at one or more of your meetings.

Some of the questions may raise issues you have not considered before. Some may raise additional questions. Take time at your meetings to discuss these issues and questions.

If you need assistance in turning "no" answers into "yes" answers, seek advice first from your librarian; if you need additional help, consult your library system, state library agency, or state library association.

Sources and Authority

These questions were prepared by Douglas W. Downey, a trustee and library board president. A basic source was *Rating Sheets for a Self-Evaluation of Your Public Library*, prepared by a joint committee of the Library Trustees' Association of New Jersey and the New Jersey Library Association (1964); some questions are taken verbatim from that source. All questions were reviewed by the Publications Committee of the American Library Trustee Association; this committee includes trustees and librarians at both the local and state levels. Research on standards was done by Mrs. Alison Ewing, reference librarian of the Northbrook (Illinois) Public Library.

These questions are intended only as a guide and do not represent official policy of the American Library Association or the American Library Trustee Association. If an agency in your area has prepared a similar questionnaire, it should, in cases of conflict, take precedence over this one.

Douglas W. Downey has been a trustee for more than seven years and is the past president of the Board of Trustees of the Northbrook (Illinois) Public Library. He is the editor in chief of *New Standard Encyclopedia*, vice-president of Standard Educational Corporation, and is currently a member of ALTA's Publications Committee.

IS THE LIBRARY DOING ITS JOB?

Physical Plant

1. Is the main library conveniently located and easily accessible?
2. Are there outlets or access to services in all parts of the community where people are likely to lack private transportation?
3. Is there a large sign outside the library identifying it?
4. Is there adequate parking for both staff and patrons?
5. Is the building space adequate to serve the population based on the following table?

Population	Total Sq. Ft. per Capita
Under 10,000	.7 to .8
10,000 - 35,000	.6 to .65
35,000 - 100,000	.5 to .6
100,000 - 200,000	.4 to .5
200,000 - 500,000	.35 to .4
500,000 and up	.3

(Source: Joseph L. Wheeler and Herbert Goldhor. *Practical Administration of Public Libraries*, New York: Harper & Row, 1962.)

6. Does the library building provide for expansion of service and community growth and for enlargement if and when needed?
7. Is the building safe? Are there adequate emergency exits, well marked? Are the floors strong enough to take, if necessary, additional shelf ranges? Has the building been examined to detect potential hazards—such as projecting edges—for small children and the elderly and have measures been taken to eliminate these hazards? If smoking is permitted in certain areas, are ashtrays always provided?
8. Was the building originally designed as a library? Recently? Did the architect benefit from the services of a qualified library building consultant? Was the building's function the primary factor in the design?
9. Has there been a building survey made by a qualified authority within the past ten years?
10. Is the building attractive, inside and out? Are the furnishings both attractive and functional?
11. Can elderly or handicapped patrons reach the main areas without having to climb interior or exterior stairs?
12. Is the building's interior plan such that control and supervision are effective and economical?
13. Is the building air conditioned? Adequately heated?
14. Does the lighting meet today's standards?
15. Are acoustical materials used wherever necessary to keep the noise level down?

16. Is there adequate space—offices and work area—for the staff, including an area where supervisors may hold private conversations with their subordinates?
17. Does the staff have its own rest area and washroom facilities?
18. Can the public washroom facilities be adequately controlled?
19. Is there a meeting room for community groups?
20. Is there provision for patrons' boots and coats?
21. Are there provisions for returning books when the library is closed, such as a book drop or door slot? Is the book drop or door slot designed in such a way that it is impossible for a child or small animal to enter the library through it?
22. Is the shelving adjustable?
23. Is the telephone service adequate? Are there public phones?
24. Is there copying equipment for public use? If microforms, such as microfilm, are part of the collection, do one or more of the readers have provision for making prints?
25. Are there signs identifying various areas of the library and of the collection, and explaining procedures (e.g., how to use the card catalog) and various rules?
26. Are there adequate facilities for displays, announcements, exhibits, and the like?
27. Do maintenance costs compare favorably with those for other public buildings in the area?
28. Is there a preventive maintenance program? Do you have service contracts for office machines, heating equipment, etc.?
29. Are the building and its contents adequately insured? (A useful book to consult in this respect is *Protecting the Library and Its Resources*, Chicago: American Library Association, 1963.) Is insurance coverage reviewed at least once every two years?

Services

1. Is the library dedicated to service rather than to the mere storage of books?
2. Does the library have definite goals? In writing? Are these goals discussed periodically?
3. Does your collection meet the needs of the entire community? Do you and the staff really know these needs? Is this knowledge based on something tangible, such as a survey? Are community needs reviewed periodically?
4. Does the library offer adequate facilities and services for preschoolers? School-age children? College students? The elderly? Shut-ins? The socially or culturally disadvantaged? Minority groups in your community?
5. Do you provide or have you considered providing any of the following: Periodical collection (bound or on microfilm), file of local newspapers, phonograph records (circulating), motion picture films, filmstrips, art slides, art reproductions (circulating), pamphlet file, picture file, college catalogs, out-of-town telephone directories, large-print books, investment information, local history collection, cultural programs, preschool reading hours, bookmobile service?
6. Does your library take full advantage of the services offered by your system library (if any) and your state library? Do you have cooperative arrangements—such as interlibrary loans, coordinated book purchases in special areas, shared equipment and personnel, etc.?
7. Have you explored the desirability of reciprocal borrowing agreements with other libraries in your area?
8. Have you considered cooperative acquisitions and cataloging services?
9. Does the library have a written statement of policy for selection of books and related materials?
10. Does the Head Librarian have the authority to approve the selection of books and related materials for purchase?
11. To meet high standards of quality of book selection, does the library have available and use a variety of tools including basic lists (such as the Standard Catalog series), general review publications (such as *Book Review Digest, Choice, Library Journal,* and *Booklist),* and subject-area periodicals (such as *Scientific American* and *American Historical Review)?*
12. Does your library meet at least MINIMUM standards for size of book collection as indicated in the following scale?

Population	Volumes per Capita
Under 10,000	3.5 to 5
10,000 - 35,000	2.75 to 3
35,000 - 100,000	2.5 to 2.75
100,000 - 200,000	1.75 to 2
200,000 - 500,000	1.5
500,000 and up	1 to 1.25

(Source: Wheeler and Goldhor, *op. cit.* In "What Good are Public Library Standards?" published in *Library Journal,* February 1, 1970, Wheeler presents a revised set of figures calling, in general, for slightly more books per capita for large and small populations and slightly less for the middle range. Various state agencies also have recommended standards.)

13. If your collection is below these standards, do you have a long-range plan to meet them?
14. Does annual purchase of new book titles equal 15 to 25 percent of the library's annual budget?
15. Are worn-out and out-of-date books regularly withdrawn from the collection?
16. Are about 65 percent of the adult books nonfiction?
17. Is the library's collection classified according to a recognized system, such as Dewey or Library of Congress?
18. Are records for items which are missing or discarded removed from the catalog?
19. Is the library open at least the following hours?

Population	Hours Open to the Public (per week)
Under 5,000	15 - 30
5,000 - 10,000	30 - 45
10,000 - 25,000	45 - 66
25,000 and up	66 - 72

20. Is the library open during the hours most convenient to the community?
21. Is there a catalog of the library collection for public use?
22. Is the catalog easily accessible to both public and staff?
23. Are directions for use posted on or near the catalog?

24. Is there a special area of the library for reference service with the reference collection nearby?
25. Are staff members trained to refer borrowers to the proper desk or department.
26. Does the library have a program of service for adults and young people which includes instruction in the use of books and libraries?
27. Does the library provide individual reading guidance?
28. Does the library supplement programs of community organizations by preparing booklists or arranging exhibits?
29. Does the library cooperate with community organizations in program planning?
30. Does the library maintain a list of community organizations?

The Staff

1. Have you reached an agreement, tacit or otherwise, with your Head Librarian as to what is policy and what is administration? Do you make it possible for your librarian to administer without constant interference from the board?
2. Does the library have at least one staff member (full-time or equivalent), exclusive of maintenance personnel, for each 2,000 people in the area served?
3. Is there a professional librarian on duty all hours the library is open?
4. Do you have written, up-to-date job descriptions?
5. Are the duties and responsibilities of each library position clearly defined, recognizing distinctions between professional and nonprofessional work?
6. Do you have a formal (that is, officially adopted) salary scale? Are its contents known to the staff?
7. Is the salary scale regularly reviewed by the board?
8. Do you know the going rate for professional librarians, clerks, secretaries, pages, and custodial personnel? Does your library compare favorably?
9. Is there a merit-incentive factor for pay increases? If so, are there safeguards to make certain it is administered objectively and fairly?
10. Do the fringe benefits equal those offered by other public bodies in your area? Do they compare favorably with those offered by local private industry?
11. Are all members of the staff informed through a manual or other means of the library's personnel policies on such matters as vacation, sick leave, salary increments, pension, hospitalization, insurance, and other fringe benefits?
12. Is the annual vacation allowance for full-time professional employees in conformity with the generally accepted standard of at least one month per year?
13. For the nonprofessional staff is the vacation period in conformity with local practice?
14. Is the work week for full-time staff members within the range of 35-40 hours?
15. Is a five-day work week scheduled whenever possible?
16. Is a rest period of at least 10 minutes provided during a continuous four-hour work period?
17. Is a regularly scheduled meal period provided for full-time staff members?
18. When overtime work is required is payment made at the rate of time-and-one-half either in salary or time off?
19. Does the library provide a specific allotment of sick leave?
20. Is unused sick leave accumulated to the staff member's credit?
21. Are staff members encouraged through staff meetings or other methods to offer suggestions for improving library services and procedures?
22. Do you have a low turnover of personnel? If not, do you know why?
23. Is the major portion of staff man-hours provided by full-time employees rather than part-time and/or volunteers?

Community Relations

1. Do you know the image your library projects to the community? Do you know why it projects that image?
2. Do you have a planned, continuously operating public relations program?
3. Do photographs or stories of library activities appear in the local press and other available media at least once a month?
4. Do you have newsletters? Do they reach all citizens rather than only library patrons?
5. Does your public relations program have as one goal the encouragement of use of the library by persons not now patrons?
6. Are your board meetings open to the public? Are they attended by observers and the local press?
7. Are the persons on the charge desk courteous and helpful to patrons?
8. Do your official policies toward overdue books, juvenile behavior problems, etc., take into consideration the poor public relations generated by excessive harshness?
9. Do you maintain good working relations with municipal and school officials?
10. Do you extend borrowing privileges to persons serving your community even though they may live outside it; i.e., teachers, public employees, etc?

Finances

1. Are you taking full advantage of all existing programs—local, state, and federal—that may assist your library?
2. Does the Head Librarian meet with the board or a committee of the board to determine budget needs on the basis of which the Librarian then prepares the annual budget?
3. Do you determine the service needs of the community that should be met by the library and then formulate your budget to meet those needs?
4. Does the board adopt the budget at an official meeting or approve it at an official meeting before submitting it to the governing body?
5. Do members of the board participate in the presentation of the budget to the governing body?
6. Do you have a policy for accepting gifts? Does this policy make it possible to politely decline unwanted gifts?
7. Do you have an organized gift-solicitation program?
8. Do you regularly approach local philanthropic groups as to how they can assist the library, keeping in mind their interests and ideas?
9. Do you acknowledge all gifts promptly and appropriately?

10. Do you refuse gifts with undesirable strings attached, such as those that would require you to surrender some of your policy-making powers to the donor?

ARE YOU DOING YOUR JOB?

Organization and Administration

1. Are you familiar with the statutes and/or ordinances that govern your operations?
2. Does the board operate under a written set of bylaws? Are the meetings run in such a way that a minimum amount of time is devoted to formalities, procedural questions, trivial details, and other unimportant but time-consuming matters?
3. Does the board meet monthly at a regular time with an agenda that has been distributed in advance?
4. Does the Head Librarian attend all board meetings and committee meetings?
5. Does the Head Librarian present a monthly written report to the board?
6. Is there a training or orientation program for new trustees? Is this program jointly conducted by the Head Librarian and senior trustees?
7. Has the library adopted a written statement of clear and specific objectives which serves as the basis of services and activities? Is there a policy manual; that is, a summary of policy decisions as extracted from the minutes of the board meetings?
8. Are the statement of objectives and the policy manual reviewed at least once every two years and revised if necessary in the light of new developments?
9. Is there a step-by-step plan for the future growth and development of the library?
10. Does the library prepare an annual report for the public and/or the governing body of the municipality? Is this report widely distributed?
11. Do members of the board and of the staff attend national, state, and regional library meetings?
12. Does the library provide funds to pay expenses to such meetings?
13. Is there adequate communication between the Head Librarian and the board, between the board president and other members, between the board and related public bodies, and among the various members of the board? Are routine reports distributed to the board prior to meetings so they can be studied in advance? Are copies of memos, reports, letters, etc., distributed to all parties concerned, including the Head Librarian?
14. Are clerical duties (such as recording the minutes or keeping the books) assigned to staff members or outside services rather than to board members?

You as a Trustee

1. Do you attend all—or virtually all—meetings of the board and committees to which you are assigned?
2. Do you do your homework?
3. Are you courteous toward your fellow trustees, even when you disagree with them?
4. Do you have a library card? Are you a regular patron?
5. Do you know your library's history? Do you know the rationale for all its various policies?
6. Do you refrain from demanding special privileges (first choice of best-sellers, special service, etc.) and, if offered, politely decline them?
7. If all the other trustees were to resign tomorrow, would you be prepared to take over, at least temporarily, as president?
8. Are you familiar with the various books and pamphlets on trusteeship? Have you read or reread any recently? Does your librarian bring current articles of interest to your attention?
9. Are you a member of your state library association, the American Library Association, and the American Library Trustee Association? Do you read their periodicals?
10. Have you ever attended a regional, state, or national meeting of library trustees? A seminar or workshop on trusteeship?
11. When visiting another city, do you ever stop into the library to look around?
12. Do you support, on the local, state, and national level, legislation favorable to libraries?

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